INTRODUCTION[2]

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THE 1980S REGISTERED a widespread expansion of electoral democracy around the world. Mainstream social sciences referred to this change as the "third wave of democratization" and they explained it through a theoretical approach that was called the "transition paradigm". According to this paradigm, countries that were previously under authoritarian rule were viewed to be moving towards democracy. The shift towards a democratic regime was characterized by the development of free and competitive elections, and by the existence of basic political and civil rights. To a large extent, democracy was equated with elections. In this analytical framework, the key factor in bringing about this political change was the acceptance of electoral results by elites and power-holders with veto power. Some of these actors were democrats, while others accepted these rules on the grounds that democratic government was a lesser evil, preferable to the dictatorships that were in decline. The centrality of elite competition for the definition of democracy reveals the Schumpeterian thrust of the "transitionists'" conception of democracy.

Although the transition paradigm belongs to the procedural theories of democracy, its emphasis on elite behavior leads to the neglect of other aspects that

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are crucial to democratic procedure. Some of these omissions even pertain to the more limited area of electoral practices, so central to the paradigm. Examples of this are the limited consideration of the regulation of electoral finance –so as to permit access to politics regardless of material wealth and to prevent plutocratic tendencies– and the equal access to the media by all participants. From a broader perspective, other omissions such as effective rights of citizen participation, government accountability and the rule of law, also exist.

Additionally, the transition paradigm has a strictly "political" definition of democracy, in contrast with the theories that prevailed in the previous decades. In the latter, democracy was viewed to be possible only when some social preconditions were achieved: it required a certain level of income, distribution of wealth, national integration or cultural homogeneity (Lipset, 1959). The transition theorists and policy-makers isolated the political process from the distributive issues that had been at the heart of the dominant theoretical trends and the political hegemony of social democracy of the three decades that followed the Second World War. In many regions of the South, but especially in Latin America, the paradox is that these democratic regimes have survived for a longer period than ever before despite a significant proportion of the population living in poverty and the highest levels of within-nation inequality in the world. Additionally, despite their shortcomings, these 2regimes are an improvement in relation to the military dictatorships that existed p2reviously.

The international aid community for the promotion of democracy abroad, which originated in the United States foreign policy and is mainly financed by its government, also adopted this perspective. Most of the global South was exposed to the language and practices that linked the institution of elections to foreign aid and these changes were viewed to be acting in the advancement of democracy (Carothers, 1997).

Two decades later, the new democracies´ achievements are, in general, restricted. Although most countries have regular elections, citizens all over the world are disappointed with the results of these political regimes that fall short of their expectations. This translates into political malaise and disaffection. In some –although few– countries of the global south this disenchantment with the practice of the democratic regimes has even led to the preference of authoritarian governments among large sectors of the population. Basic problems, such as the significant proportion of the population that lives in poverty as well as the huge and growing social and economic inequalities that prevail in most countries of the south, were not and have not been dealt with. As has already been mentioned, they were not even part of the third wave's ethos. However, positive social outcomes do form part of citizen´s expectations of democracy and democracy has to provide mechanisms of inclusion in order to be sustainable in the long term.

From the standpoint of the present, the shallowness of the transition paradigm's assumptions and practice is obvious (Carothers, 2002) and it is clear that a broader lens of observation is required. If we think of liberal democracy as an

indigenous product of Western Europe and the United States, where the content of these regimes is a product of the social and political struggles that took place in those countries and the concrete historical processes by which popular demands and elite politics were –an2d constantly are– negotiated and renegotiated, we can also look for different roads and proposals in the global south, where elections have been imported, and in some cases have even been an imposition. This path, however, demands a shift away from the institutional arrangements that characterized the development of liberal democracy in Europe and the United States and to look at and evaluate the processes that take place in the global south. It requires that we move from the study of democracy (as a specific institutional regime) to that of democratization (as a process). Charles Tilly (2007) recently set forth a useful framework for the study of democratization in historical perspective. He defines democracy as a kind of relationship between state and society characterized by political inclusion and equality of all citizens, the existence of mutually binding consultation between those that govern and those that are governed, and the protection of citizens from arbitrary state action. De-democratization occurs when there are reversals in these conditions.

Tilly identifies three broad mechanisms that lead to democratization: the development of political trust, the increase in political equality, and the decrease of the autonomy and the impact of independent power centers on the making of public policy. The development of political trust occurs when "trust networks integrate significantly into regimes, and thus motivate their members to engage in mutually binding consultation" (Tilly, 2007: 74). This process entails the dissolution or integration of segregated trust networks and the creation of politically connected trust networks. The sec2ond mechanism, that of an increase in political equality, is grounded on the principle that democracy requires the insulation of politics from categorical inequality. This takes place through two combined processes: in the reduction of inequality and in the buffering of politics from inequality in other terrains (so that social, economic or ethnic differences do not translate into differences of effective political rights). Finally, the decrease of the autonomy of independent power centers on public policies is a necessary condition, as a requirement of democracy is that all citizens, groups and power centers are accountable to the law. It is particularly important that the military are subordinated to civilian government and that powerful economic and political actors are legally accountable (O´Donnell).

In this broader conception of the processes that lead to the creation of democratic regimes, the institution of elections, as the rule of "one citizen one vote", is an important condition of democratic practice, as it provides a mechanism for translating political equality into collective decision making and the selection of governments. However, elections are clearly not sufficient, as they in and of themselves, do not eliminate the obstacles for effective inclusion and political equality of all citizens. In fact, when elections are not grounded in practices that guarantee fair competition, ample citizen participation and the construction of

political representation, they often become a façade for regimes that are in practice authoritarian.

As a consequence, the political equality necessary for effective inclusion cannot be considered as given, since different forms of social, economic, cultural, educational or ethnic inequalities translate into politics. Full political equality is as yet an unachieved ideal in the entire world. The greater level of political equality that exists in some countries is the outcome of long historical processes and not a point of departure. The absence of –or limitations to– political equality are a necessary starting point for the discussion of democratization. This also opens our analytical perspective so as to discuss which processes lead to the development of citizenship.

Discontent with the results and achievements of the democratic regimes have led scholars to take one step back, to processes were citizens become involved in politics and social struggles. As a consequence, the main strains of recent research in relation to democratization in the south have revolved around the promise of participation. Much research has been done on the impact of citizen participation in achieving substantive goals in the distribution of power and social and economic goods through social movements and citizen organizations. However, very often this research does not elaborate the impact that these collective experiences have on the political regime. The regime level is dismissed as "formal", "electoral" or "liberal" democracy, which is often viewed as impenetrable, despite the fact that it is there where the political decisions that have the broadest implications are made.

As a result of these trends, most of the papers presented in this workshop –and the core of our discussions– dealt with different forms of popular participation, this is, the participation of subaltern groups in social movements, organizations or in the planning and implementation of government programs. Despite the emphasis on participation, we sought to elaborate how these different forms of popular democracy impact on political regimes. The articles presented thus attempt to answer two kinds of questions. First: Has citizen participation led to institutional or cultural changes in the polity? If so, in what ways? What can be learned from these experiences? Secondly: have different forms of participation contributed to the democratization of political regimes in the South? What relationships between civil and political society have been conducive to the enhancement of representation? Are the politics of political representation of social movements and civil society conducive to the deepening of democratic governance?

In the following pages I briefly describe the contributions that these papers make to this discussion.

The first part of the book deals with citizen participation in civil society. The most ambitious effort is that of Dagnino, Olvera and Panfichi. They provide us with some conclusions of a research endeavor that spanned many years and investigated participatory experiences in many Latin American countries, in search of the many innovations in the articulation between state and society that have led

to democratic outcomes. Their paper does two things: it presents a characterization of what the authors call the democratic-participatory project, and it provides some examples of participatory democratic experiences. They focus on (1) institutional innovations that have attempted to increase oversight and accountability, with a particular emphasis on those that imply citizen initiative and participation; (2) the creation of public spaces that make conflict public and ensure that different interests and positions debate and deliberate different political options and projects; and (3) what they call "interfaces" between the state and civil society. These interfaces refer to "places and moments of interaction between social and political actors, limited by institutions or normalized practices, in which conflicting views and interests are put forward, publicized and negotiated". These spaces are both instituted and instituting thus opening the possibility for a politicization of political and policy issues.

The review of the experiences studied over the past decade has led the authors to determine that the main contributions of the democratic-participatory project are the broadening of the field of politics and the construction of citizenship through innovations in the relationship between state and society. The re-politicization of conflicts that the neoliberal project had confined to the terrain of technical expertise or philanthropy and the placing of conflict at the center of the political endeavor, leads to a re-signification of politics. Notwithstanding the horizon of hope that these experiences open, the authors also point to the limited and fragmented nature of the participatory-democratic project. Citizen participation in budgeting and councils that allocate public resources finds limits in the restricted amount of money that is to be distributed. The experiences of the creation of public spaces are limited by the social impact of the commercial media that does not follow the logic of politicization of issues or of fairness in the participation of positions and interests. Societal efforts at ensuring oversight and accountability are limited by the asymmetry between these organizations and the political and economic resources of power-holders that allow the latter to circumvent efforts at holding them responsible for social and political actions.

Chaguaceda, much in the same field of inquiry as Dagnino, Olvera and Panfichi, examines the different forms of the "associative space" in contemporary Cuba. He defines it as "the relatively autonomous creation of groups (organization) and collective action, beyond and outside of the political and economic spheres, that channel the voluntary actions of citizens in diverse spheres of particular interest, characterized by logics of reciprocity, solidarity, symmetric interaction and the defense of shared identities" (Chaguaceda). The contribution of these associative spaces to democratization lies in their contribution to the building of trust and social integration, as well as the creation of a sociopolitical sphere beyond the state. However, the broader political impact of these associations is not clear.

Both contributions find the discourse of participation to be a mine field that creates difficulties for conceptual development and for the action of social groups. Dagnino, Olvera and Panfichi have identified a "perverse logic" in that

both the democratic project from the left and the neoliberal project claim the virtues of participation, although with different and ultimately opposed implications for the relations of power and the field of politics. Chaguaceda identifies a relatively different "perverse logic" between the organizations' concept of the associative space and that of the bureaucratic logic, which is dominant in –although not exclusive of– the state and parastate organizations.

The second part of the book deals with participation in the contentious action of social movements. Three papers are included. Two of them deal with social movements in Argentina at the beginning of the twenty-first century: Inés María Pousadela´s research on the experience of the neighborhood assemblies of Buenos Aires (2001-2003) and Gabriela Bukstein's on the *piquetero* movement. The third paper included in this section is Gudavarthy and Vijay´s study on the struggle of the villagers of Kazipally in India against the pollution brought about by government-backed industrialization.

Ines Pousadela analyses citizen participation in the context of the profound crisis of representation that reached its peak on December 19th and 20th, 2001, in Argentina. She then elaborates on the discourse of political representation and deliberation developed by the neighborhood assemblies that emerged in its wake. One important idea that emerges from her paper is that the events of December 19-20 show how critical junctures and citizen mobilization can contribute to democratic outcomes. On December 19th, the government declared a state of siege to control the crisis that it was facing and the threat of ingovernability. During that night masses of citizens took to the streets in open defiance of the curfew. Hours later, the president resigned. Unlike other moments of Argentina´s history, the military did not step in. Rather, different leaders, parties, and the remaining authorities sought a solution to fill the political void for a protracted period of several months

The short episode of December 19 and the following months signal two crucial differences with the past in terms of the process of democratization: (1) the active rejection by citizens of an authoritarian power strategy and (2) the unwillingness or inability of the military to take over at a critical moment, contributing decisively to the definition of the course of history. Additionally collective action empowered those citizens by bringing them together in the pursuit of a shared goal

The second part of Pousadela´s paper deals with the discourses on representation and forms of political power held by the members of the neighborhood assemblies that emerged in the wake of the mobilization. The elaboration of the crisis of representation led to a profound questioning of representative democracy, through meetings, deliberations and discussions that took place over several months. However, as a "normality" of some sort returned, attendance to the assemblies waned, leaving behind relatively scarce achievements in relation to their members' initial hopes and goals.

Pousadela concludes on a note of uncertainty as to the durable contribution of the assemblies to democratization. Their achievements at the institutional level are clearly restricted as most assemblies have stopped meeting and those

that have continued to do so have changed their goals. However, it is also clear that they created new discourses and practices of deliberation. They might have also contributed to the creation of some sort of social capital at a local level since many neighbors who had never spoken to one another before became acquainted and participated jointly in the assembly. According to assembly members, there is agreement that these practices could become reactivated if and when a new crisis strikes. Additionally, the activation of a citizenry now aware of the limits of representative democracy might force governments to be more accountable for their actions, thus keeping them in check. Last but not least, as a result of the assemblies' interactions with local governments and politicians, these tend to be no longer viewed as an undifferentiated corrupt mass, and citizens are more able to tell the difference among them.. However, only time will tell whether these are the soon-to-disappear effects of a critical set of events, or the long-lasting results of a process of collective learning triggered by a traumatic situation.

Gabriela Bukstein works on another form of contentious collective action that emerged in the nineties in Argentina, that of the *"piqueteros*". These are organizations of the unemployed that united former workers of those areas of the economy that were eliminated, generating the destruction of thousands of jobs. They developed *piquetes* (roadblocks) as their main form of struggle, hence their name. Bukstein traces the development of a specific group, that of the MTD-Evita. Her focus is on the forms in which their success at the grassroots level and through contentious collective action translates into traditional forms of participation at the local level; through the participation in local government of the movement's leader. She considers that the main democratic outcomes of their actions are the increase in popular claim-making, the articulation of territorial organizations and the institution of assemblies where issues are discussed and decisions are made through a horizontal mode of organization. She also highlights how these spaces where neighbors meet and discuss reverses the fatalism that imbued political life during the 1990s and "reinvests individuals with their capacity to be true actors in public life", while simultaneously reconstructing social bonds and trust.

The third paper in this section analyses a set of acts of resistance by the villagers of Kazipally against an industry that threatens not only their livelihood but also their health. Gudavarthy and Vijay explain how a poor area was included in a program of incentives for industrial development in peripheral areas, which led to the attraction of highly polluting industries, both transnationally and locally owned, which contaminated land and water. These enterprises engage in lobbying in political circles, bribing of bureaucracy and nexus with mafia to sustain their illegal manufacturing practices. Through interviews with three groups of villagers (an association of farmers, a youth group and a microcredit association of women), the authors find that "whenever the people have raised structural questions through their collective political activity, they have faced uncivil means of repression both from the coercive state apparatus like the police and coercion from

organized mafia". On three occasions the villagers demanded the closure of polluting industries, in 1989, 1994 and 1995. Every time the leaders of the movement were accused of attempted murder and were attacked by the local mafia, to the extent that they had to leave the village. In 2005 however, the case reached the Supreme Court. Despite the threats, villagers mobilized in huge numbers to testify against the industry. When industrialists saw the hearing might go wrong for them they attacked a Greenpeace activist, thus dispersing attention. The following day the industry bribed a group of villagers to attend the hearing in its defense.

Parallel to this "structural demand" of the villagers, the authors also point to other struggles for employment, repairs to the water tanks, refraining industries from dumping untreated effluents into the village tank and setting up a health center (the occurrence of some diseases is between 200 and 300 normal rates). However, none of these demands have been achieved. Additionally, the provision of monetary compensation and chances of employment to certain individuals has contributed to dividing the community over the access to benefits.

Gudavarthy and Vijay´s paper leaves us with a feeling that the disempowerment of these villagers is extreme and will find no easy remedies, despite their courage in their struggle against the industries. Their lack of protection from arbitrary state and non state action has weakened their political activity, damaged their environment and their health, and left unanswered questions in relation to the possibilities for democratization in conditions of such extreme inequality of resources and access to the political system. This paper, more than any other presented at the workshop, leaves us with the uneasy feeling that there are situations in which basic conditions for democratization are absent and that people´s struggle is not framed in a minimal protection from arbitrary action by powerful actors. How many villages of the global south are exposed to similar conditions? Can there be democratic outcomes out of struggles that are so uneven, with populations that are so unprotected by the rule of law?

The third section of the book shifts away from the issues of citizen participation in democratization and emphasizes the role of institutions. Gillian Hui Lynn Goh´s paper analyses the impressive legal reform that has taken place in China after Tiennamen (1989). The approval and enforcement of legislation that protects citizens from arbitrary state action has led to the exponential growth of local associations, protest movements, citizen denunciations of corruption and irregular practices by state officials and the institutionalization of elections at the local level. The Chinese Communist Party cells have been weakened or disappeared in much of rural China and have been substituted by local associations of government. Like Chaguaceda´s paper, the author identifies the autonomy from state power and intervention to be the main change necessary to foster the development of democratic associative life at the local level. Her focus on the institutional and legal changes that have taken place over the past two decades highlights the importance of regulatory changes to foster democratization. However, she also shows that progress is not linear, as illustrated by the case of the ar-

bitrary repression of a religious organization, the Falun Gong. In this incident, the Communist Party reverted to the discretionary action of the ruler, a practice that is strongly embedded in Chinese political culture since the time of the emperors, thus invalidating the rule of law as a universal principle applicable to all.

Alex Freepong´s paper addresses institutional change in the electoral field in Ghana. Through his paper, we go full circle, returning to the importance of regulating elections to make them free and fair, so as to permit the rule of "one citizen, one vote". Freepong shows how an independent Electoral Commission has had a crucial role in regulating elections since 1992, by simultaneously maintaining autonomy and permanent communication with other political actors. Independence, dialogue and consultation seem to be the key to Ghana´s success. A particularly important innovation of the Electoral Commission has been the creation of a site for consensus-building with representatives of political parties, the Interparty Advisory Committee. Additionally, political actors as diverse as NGOs, churches, youth and women´s organizations have assumed roles in domestic electoral observation. The media has contributed by reporting widely on the electoral process, generating interest among the population. Jorge Rovira´s commentary on this paper, situates the importance of the Interparty Advisory Committee in comparison to the Central American experience.

The fourth and final section of the book includes one paper, that of Ashok Swain on minority rights. Swain elaborates his paper on the basis of Tocqueville´s insight that democracy in and of itself does not necessarily protect minorities, as majority rule can lead to the abuse of the rights of groups that cannot achieve their goal. As a consequence, Swain posits that norms and regulations are required for the protection of groups that are quantitatively at a disadvantage.

During the workshop our main and most heated debates were related to the extent to which experiences of participation lead to democratic outcomes. Is all popular participation democratic? Are the outcomes always democratic? This discussion was triggered by Partha Chatterjee´s (2004) framework for the analysis of popular politics. Chatterjee does not assume a specific institutional form of politics in those countries that do not belong to the historical experience of the developed west. Rather, he suggests that politics in "most of the world"[3] (which is similar to what we are here calling the "global south") "is conditioned by the functions and activities of modern governmental systems that have now become part of the expected functions of governments everywhere." (Chatterjee, 2004: 3). The direct relationships between the subaltern and the state shape politics in what he calls "political society". These relationships bypass the mediation of civil society which is assumed to be a natural part of democratic governance in the western model, and construct different forms of mediations. This theoretical

3 "In a general sense, those parts of the world that were not direct participants in the history of the evolution of the institutions of modern capitalist democracy", Chatterjee, 2004:3).

step, shifts the center of the debate away from democratization into the field of governmentality, and sheds a different light on popular struggles and the state´s action in confronting the people´s claims, as they do not *necessarily* lead to the development of citizenship or democratization.

Two important points were drawn from the debate around Chatterjee´s framework. First, that for the attending African and Latin American scholars alike, what Chatterjee calls political society is part of what is named "civil society" in these regions. In other words, the African and Latin American traditions do not place emphasis on the "civil" and legal nature of civil society, but rather on the historically specific forms in which society (or civil society) is related to the state. These can be civil or uncivil, legal or illegal.

The second point is more important. Chatterjee´s framework opens the examination of the relationship between the state and the subaltern beyond democratization. As a result not all forms of popular participation are democratic and secondly, that not all participatory processes lead to democratic outcomes. Most importantly, many questions remain unanswered as to what conditions of participation lead to full citizenship and democratic governance and which do not. This debate illuminated a field of theorization and research which forces us to question our assumptions on popular participation and its possibly diverse links to democratization.

Having made this very important point, the experiences of participation that the authors chose to bring to the workshop are all related to the quest for democracy, which means that they belong to a subset of forms of participation, those that are or aspire to be, conducive to democratization.

To organize the balance of the impact on democratization of the experiences analysed in the workshop I draw on Tilly´s (2007) three process analysis.

1. The development of political trust.

The papers included in this book find strong evidence of the contribution of participatory experiences to the development of political trust. Several papers point to the importance of the opportunities they create for citizens to meet, to act together, to identify common interests and construct common identities (Dagnino, Olvera, Panfichi; Chaguaceda; Bukstein; Pousadela). In this sense, it can be said that much is about constructing networks of trust that are politically connected. It is important to point out that many of these networks are created *through* political action, meaning that these networks do not exist previously and are *then* politically integrated. In most of the studies people meet and develop political trust in the course of political action.

However, again Gudavarthy and Vijay force us to situate this conclusion: the development of political trust is only possible in a context of rule of law and the protection of basic rights.

2. The increase in political equality

The empowerment of citizens also seems to contribute to democratization in terms of the increase in political equality. The activation of citizens in and of

itself implies demands of recognition. However, it is also clear that full inclusion is still a goal to be achieved and multiple mechanisms of power continue to restrict democratic achievements. The piqueteros are to a large extent structurally unemployed workers, persons who cannot hope to return to their jobs because they have disappeared and new ones have not been created (and when they are, it is highly probable that they will not match their professional abilities, as is often the case with the long-term unemployed). Political action makes them visible and introduces their demands into the public sphere. However, their social and economic hardship also makes them more vulnerable to unequal relationships such as patronage and clientelism. Pousadela´s middle class assembly members are less vulnerable. However, there is a large degree of inequality between them and the strong capital holders that were able to avoid the restrictions set by the *corralito* (freezing of bank deposits). Dagnino, Olvera and Panfichi point to the scarcity of resources to be distributed through participatory budgeting. They also show the attempts of bureaucratic officials to limit the power of advisory councils. Chaguaceda points to associations that pay for their independence through the lack of access to state resources. In short: popular participation and struggles contribute to political equality and make diverse social actors visible in the public sphere, but power relations remain extraordinarily asymmetric, and ordinary citizens still face tremendous odds when they act politically.

3. The decrease of the autonomy and the impact of independent power centers on the making of public policy

The evidence provided by the papers does not point to a uniform decrease of the autonomy of independent power centers. The most dramatic case of a large degree of autonomy of powerful actors is that presented by Gudavarthy and Vijay, where it is clear that the enormous inequality in the access to legal action between the villagers and the factory owners puts the former at an extraordinary disadvantage, to the point of threatening to destroy the villagers' form of life and even their lives, as well as the trust networks amongst them. Factory owners and the local mafias are relatively autonomous power centers that are not subject to the rule of law. As a consequence, the courage of the villagers' resistance and their alliance with NGO activists is insufficient. The judicial system does not intervene to support their claims which ultimately confirms the mafias' and factory owners' relative power.

In contrast, Pousadela points to a very significant positive change in relation to the past: the unusual political action of citizens and the inaction of the military. In her account of December 19th, 2001, mobilized citizens rejected curfew, and demanded not less, but more democracy. The military did not take over where the civilian government failed. This is clearly a movement towards democratization in relation to the military dictatorships of two decades ago, where the military frequently stepped in at moments such as this one.

However, two important problems with autonomous power holders seem to continue to exist: the lack of accountability of public officials that do not accept being held by the terms of the law, and the autonomous power of business. These issues were only marginally dealt with in the workshop due to the angle from which the subject matter was approached. One of the shortcomings of the focus on participatory experiences for the study of democratization is that it creates blind spots such as those related to the study of elite politics as well as the relationship between the subaltern and political elites.

The rejection of officials to abide by the rule of law is particularly clear in Gillian Hui Lynn Goh's paper, as well as that of Gudavarthy and Vijay. Indirectly, much can be inferred from the Latin American experiences as well: while participatory politics is restricted to the local level and applies to relatively small budgets, decisions at the national level are strongly insulated from citizen overview. Two problems derive from this insulation: the limits of citizen access to crucial distributive issues, and the corruption of public officials.

The autonomous power of business frequently takes place through the joint action of transnational corporations and domestic business. They act as a formidable autonomous power that is often not held accountable by the state. Additionally, the neoliberal revolution has weakened the state capacity in relation to the power of business. This situation is particularly acute in the global south, where the policies of the international financial institutions have contributed to this shift in power relations. This is particularly visible in the role of business in Gudavarthy and Vijay´s study. In the case of Argentina, Pousadela shows that big, concentrated capital amounts were not affected by the "corralito", which diminished the savings of ordinary citizens. Summing up the argument: participatory experiences have contributed to the development of trust and political equality. The main obstacle for democratization in the global south lies in the difficulty of diminishing the autonomous power of political and economic elites.

Our conclusions are limited and tentative. Citizen participation *can* and in many circumstances *does* contribute to the development of more active and knowledgeable citizens. However, the limits of participatory models beg the question in relation to the other aspects needed for democratization of political regimes and how to achieve them in the extraordinarily asymmetric power relations dominant in the global south. Empowered citizens are part of the equation, but they are not enough. The creation of institutions that protect citizens against the arbitrary action of the state or other social or political actors, provide them with access to accurate information and hold public officials accountable are equally necessary for democratic develop-

ment. The papers that point to legal and institutional settings (Goh, Freepong and Swain) shed some light on this direction. However, this again leads us to the modeling of democracy in the terms of the values and institutions of "modern capitalist democracy". It still remains to be seen if this is the only possible form of democracy. In terms of this model, the main problem that remains to be dealt with in the "South" –and possibly elsewhere also– is the power and the autonomy of economic and political elites, both national and foreign, and their acceptance of the rule of law.

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